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For Immediate Release
September 14, 2004

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**Environment Department Requests Public Input on Draft Permit for
Fort Wingate in Northwestern New Mexico**

(Santa Fe, NM) –The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) today released for public comment a draft permit for closure, post-closure care and corrective action at the U.S. Army Fort Wingate Depot Activity (FWDA) located in McKinley County.

The draft Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste facility permit requires closure of an Open Burn/Open Detonation Unit and surrounding explosives kickout area and comprehensive investigation and cleanup of contaminated sites at FWDA. The investigation and cleanup requirements include investigation and remediation of ground water and sites contaminated during historic operations. The draft Permit also sets a schedule for the initiation of environmental cleanup work across the entire FWDA facility.

FWDA has been in existence since 1848. Operations at FWDA have included generation, treatment, storage, disposal, and other management of solid and hazardous wastes including munitions and other explosives-related wastes. These wastes were generated, stored, treated and disposed of at numerous sites located throughout FWDA and have been classified by the NMED as solid waste management units (SWMUs) or Areas of Concern (AOCs). The types of hazardous and solid wastes that have been handled and disposed of include high explosives, metals, polychlorinated biphenyls, nitrates, and perchlorate.

NMED is inviting the public to submit written comments on the draft Permit during a 90 day public comment period that starts today. Members of the public may submit to NMED written comments on the draft Permit at any time during the public comment period. NMED will issue a final Permit after considering all written comments received from the public. NMED will also schedule a hearing, if requested by the public and granted by the NMED Secretary.

Both the draft Permit and the administrative record may be reviewed at the NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau located at 2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505-6303, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Procedures for submitting written comments, requests for a public hearing, and a copy of the draft RCRA Permit are also available

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at the NMED website:

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/HWB/fwdaperm.html>

Written comments and requests for a public hearing will be accepted until **December 13, 2004, at 5:00 p.m.**

For additional information, please contact James Bearzi, Chief, NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau, at (505) 428-2512, or Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

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